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## ABSTRACT

The document offers numerous examples of using the media in teaching local government and explains how to create appropriate materials. Suggestions are to collect news from newspapers and to record news and forum discussions on local radio stations. Forms and pamphlets can be collected from offices of the court clerk, probate judge, tax commissioner, police department, zoning commissioner, and voter registrar. Detailed instructions for preparing and showing slides are provided and topics are suggested. Slide shows could depict activities of the police department, courts, correctional facilities, and county commissioners. Transparencies of county maps, floor plans of the courthouse, organizational charts, methods for computing taxes, and current issues may also be prepared. Special techniques involve use of circuit boards and computer aided instruction. Circuit boards are easily constructed devices which signal correct responses with lights or buzzers. Steps for construction are provided. Computers may be used for individualized instruction, pre- and posttests, and games. Finally, field trips and a voter registration program are suggested. (KC)

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A MULTI-MEDIA APPROACH TO TEACHING  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON THE SECONDARY LEVEL

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## INTRODUCTION

Twentieth century man lives but a few seconds before his life is altered by government regulations. For today's youth, maturation is increasingly interspersed with federal, state, and local guidelines. All these guidelines play an important role in one's life. One purpose of the school system is to educate the student to be a functioning adult in the political world which he inherits at age eighteen.

Almost all high schools offer courses in civics, American government, problems of democracy, or similar courses. Often it is felt that students participating in these courses will acquire the knowledge necessary to deal with the three levels of government. Endless classroom time is often spent learning the duties of the three branches, the system of checks and balances, and the powers of elected officials. To a lesser extent the student acquires facts about the organization of state government. However, few high schools offer more than "tongue-in-check" knowledge on local government.

Regardless of what students do after leaving high school, they come into contact with the three levels of government. For some the only contact with the federal government may be enlistment in the armed forces, payment of income and other taxes, presidential elections, and federal jury duty. State government, although nearer to the student geographically, is taken for granted. Primarily, this is because most of the state's rules, regulations, and restrictions are administered on the local level, which in most cases is the county. Automobile tags, property taxes, marriage licenses, wills, deeds, divorces, civil and criminal suits, business licenses, building permits, voter registration, and endless other duties are performed locally. The average student

wonders where, when, how, and why these are obtained.

Teachers can no longer assume that because local government is nearby, students understand its duties or will participate in it. With the national voting age now set at 18 by the 26th Amendment, high school must not only educate for the future alone but for the present as well.

If the knowledge about local government is so crucial to the lives of citizens in the United States, means for effectively teaching local government must be developed by social studies curricular persons. A multi-media approach for the teaching of a unit on local government was developed at Troup County High School, LaGrange, Georgia. Troup County is located in western Georgia adjacent to eastern Alabama. Troup County High School has 950 students drawn from the rural areas of the county and the suburban areas of LaGrange, a rapidly developing industrial site.

The remaining part of this paper presents the material used in the multi-media approach for teaching local government at Troup County High School. The media aids considered and discussed include newspapers, sample documents, telephone books, maps, floorplans, slides, transparencies, circuit boards, and computer assisted instruction. Also included are means by which classroom visitation trips to local government sites can be organized and implemented. The teacher's role as a voter registrar for the school's voting age population is also explored. Although the local media materials included were designed for use in Troup County, Georgia, similar materials could be amassed in other areas of the nation.

## MULTI-MEDIA METHODS

Collecting local media

The availability of local media materials depends upon the size, organization, and facilities of the local government. Usually the more active local governments provide the largest and more varied resources. For the classroom teacher, this is the easiest media to acquire, but unfortunately the most often overlooked.

Newspapers. In most states, law requires that public notices be advertised in local newspapers. Each local unit of government, therefore, has either a local newspaper, published daily or weekly, or meets its legal obligations by using neighboring papers. The news surrounding local government is made available in print to the public.

Newspapers can be used in the classroom in several ways. The frequency and means are up to each individual teacher. Several possibilities are:

1. classroom subscriptions with newspapers being read daily during the studying of local government.
2. student clipping of articles for an assigned "local current event day" or daily discussion of local news articles.
3. teacher clipping of articles and duplicating by ditto, thermofax, xerox, or overhead projection. Most local editors readily give consent to duplicating materials for classroom use. The individual teacher should check local policy before duplicating materials.
4. student scrapbooks.

Sometimes local papers include articles of interest such as interviews, debates, editorials, budget graphs, and community progress reports. These articles should be laminated and stored in a pamphlet file for further use.

Radio Stations. Another source of local government information is the radio station. Many stations include "forum" type discussions on local issues as a part of their programming. These usually consist of ten to twenty minute interviews during which an in-dept look is taken at a matter of local concern. Most often local personalities speak out on the issues. Station managers often allow these programs to be taped directly from the air or will provide means for studio duplication. Over a yearly period, these tapes build up an extensive library of local materials. The student may listen to the tapes either individually or in small groups. At other times, the teacher may want to play the tape to the entire classroom for discussion. Generally, the only requirements for duplication and playback are a cassette recorder and a supply of inexpensive tapes.

Local stations also provide news coverage. Many feature five minute newsbreaks twice an hour. With planning a teacher can provide a time during most class periods when other classwork can stop and students can listen to the local news over a transistor radio. It is also possible to record earlier newscast and play the tapes during the class period. Regardless of the method used, the students are motivated toward discussion.

Courthouse, public libraries and public meetings. There are other sources of local media. A visit to courthouse offices yields an abundance of pamphlets on many subjects. These can be catalogued in the classroom pamphlets file for student use. Sometimes enough pamphlets are made available for each student to own a copy. County officials operate through handbooks and regulations provided by state agencies. Old copies of these sources are sometimes given away. Officials may provide sample copies of the various forms and documents they use in

their offices. What can be more exciting to a class than actually looking at laminated sample copies of marriage licenses, summons, voter registration cards, ballots, and police reports? If the exact copy of a document cannot be obtained, duplication by xerox or photography may be a means by which the material can be returned to the classroom. In some instances county officials have 16mm motion picture films, filmstrips, or slide programs which may be borrowed. Other officials may be willing to visit the school or may have the public relation officers present programs.

Still another source of information is the public library. Many federal and state agencies deposit copies of their community studies in local libraries. A wealth of information may be found on crime, housing, population, and industrial development to name but a few. Also, not to be overlooked are public meetings on various topics. City and county council meetings are usually held in the evening and could be attended by some members of the class.

The value of locally prepared media is not in what it replaces but rather in what it adds to textbook study. Students are acquainted with local personalities; they become aware of their local political environment; they stay abreast of immediate local concerns; and they study materials not normally covered by the textbook. The list which follows is a sampling of some media which a teacher may collect at the local courthouse and public library. While this relates to Troup County, Georgia, other counties have similar sources.

#### A sampling of courthouse media.

##### I. Office of the Clerk of Court

##### A. Samples to be collected:

1. Summons to Grand Jury Duty
2. Summons for Petit Jury Duty
3. Judge's Interrogatory to Felony Defendant
4. Summons for Guilty Plea in State Court
5. Subpoena for Witness, State Court
6. Misdemeanor Sentence
7. Operating Motor Vehicle Under the Influence of Intoxicants (Warrants and Sentencing)
8. Driving W-O License (Warrant and Sentencing)
9. Waiver of Counsel by Defendant
10. Felony or State Misdemeanor Sentence (Probation)
11. Criminal Appearance Bond
12. State Court of Troup County, Misdemeanor Sentence
13. Subpoena, Witness for Superior Court
14. Subpoena, Witness for Grand Jury
15. Grand Jury Indictment

- B. A Manual for Grand Jurors in Troup County, Georgia
- C. A Manual for Jurors in Georgia
- D. Land deeds, titles and plats
- E. Court records open to the public
- F. Policies, Rules and Regulations--State Board of Pardons and Parole
- G. Crime and Correction--A Guide to Action

## II. Office of the Probate Judge

- A. Samples to be collected:
  1. Primary Election ballots
  2. General Election ballots
  3. Special Election ballots
  4. Marriage Licenses
  5. Gun Toter's Licenses
- B. Georgia Election Code and State Election Board Rules
- C. Slides or xerox copies of:
  1. Minutes of Probate Court
  2. Old wills
  3. Old county newspapers

## III. Office of the Tax Commissioner or Collector

- A. Samples to be collected:
  1. Tax notices
  2. Business licenses
  3. Automobile ad valorem tax guides
  4. Tag applications
- B. County budget
- C. Information on how to compute taxes

#### IV. Office of the Sheriff or Police Department

##### A. Samples to be collected:

1. FBI wanted posters
2. Fingerprint cards
3. Miranda cards
4. Booking reports
5. Incident reports
6. Traffic citations
7. Radio operator's information cards
8. Commercial Security Report
9. Offense, Arrest, Clearance Reports  
(Used for DUI or public drunk)
10. Supplemental Reports
11. Troup County, Voluntary Statement Under Arrest

##### B. "10" Code (Signals used by law enforcement agencies)

##### C. Pamphlets:

1. "A Child's Life Is At Stake, Against Crime Together-Child Abuse (GBI)"
2. "How To Protect Your Home and Family Against Burglary"
3. "UACT, United Against Crime"
4. "Home Security Hardware"
5. "Rape, A Crime Against Women"
6. "Join Operation, ID"
7. "You Can Stop the Con Artist"
8. "GBI, Personal Property Record"
9. "To Help Keep Your Home Safe from Burglars"

#### V. Office of the Zoning Commissioner

- A. Current maps of county
- B. Maps of proposed annexation and future growth
- C. Zoning regulations

#### VI. Office of the Voter Registrar

- A. Voting requirements
- B. Maps of precincts
- C. Dates of elections
- D. Pamphlets on voting

Special Note: Georgia Law requires high school principles or their appointees to be made Deputy Voter Registrars.

Media available in the LaGrange Memorial Library

Agencies of Georgia State Government, 1969

American Legion Scrapbooks of World War II

Annual Reports, Department of Education, State of Georgia

Capital Budget Reports, State of Georgia, 1978-1981

Chattahoochee-Flint Areawide Current News Bulletin

Chattahoochee-Flint Areawide Economic Base and Population Study

Chattahoochee-Flint Areawide Housing Needs Analysis

Classified Business and Profesional Directory, LaGrange, Georgia, 1947

Code of Georgia, Unannotated Edition, 1972-1978

County and City Data Books, Colonial Times to 1967

Crime in Georgia, 1975

Criminal Justice Standards and Goals for Georgia

Employment and Wages, Georgia Department of Labor, 1977

Environment Impact Analysis, West Georgia Tollway

Georgia Development Resources Handbook

Georgia Handbook of Wills

Georgia Official and Statistical Register, 1945-1972

General Population Census, Georgia 1970

Georgia School Laws, 1974

Georgia Statistical Abstract

Handbook for Georgia Legislators

Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmen

Handbook of Georgia Agencies

History of Troup County, Georgia

LaGrange City Directory, 1927-1978

North Central Georgia Health Systems Plans, 1977

Organization of School Systems in Georgia

Report of the Governor's Committee on Crime and Justice

Soil Survey ReportsState and Local Government PurchasingThe Code of the City of LaGrange, GeorgiaThe Municipal Year Book, 1969-1977The Property Taxation Laws of GeorgiaTroup County School Survey, 1961United States Census of Population, 1960, GeorgiaPreparing and using local media

Telephone books, maps and floorplans. The concept of what local government is and how complex it is baffles the average student. Local government is the local courthouse. The degree to which he understands the services provided there usually comes from personal contact. Most junior and senior students know that is where to buy an automobile tag or where to pay a traffic fine.

In the teacher's manual for County Government in Georgia is a "Knowledge of Government Services Test." The student answers nineteen questions by indicating if the service is performed by the federal government, state government, or county government. The catch is that all of the services are provided by county governments.

This test demonstrates to the class that county government is more complex than what was imagined. The concept of how large it is can be demonstrated by noting the many listings in the local telephone book. Copies of telephone books can be obtained from the local telephone business office.

A suggested sequence for using the telephone book, maps, and floorplans follows:

1. The student locates county offices in the telephone book, generally under the name of the county. A count of the number of offices and services gives some idea as to the size of local government.

The student next compares county services with those listed under federal and state governments. On a worksheet, the student writes the name of each office, its location, and its phone number. (See Chart I, page 11)

2. A brief description of the duties and responsibilities of each office is presented by the teacher. When possible, allow students to explain their knowledge of county offices. Details which they omit can be filled in later.
3. To help students realize the size of the county, its boundaries, and the locations of county services blank maps of the county seat with street locations of the various office buildings are distributed. On the map appropriate symbols are drawn by the student as he locates the various departments of county government. (See Charts II and III, pages 12-13)
4. Since most services of county government are found in the courthouse, drawings of the courthouse floorplans can be distributed and each office located and labeled. The student now knows the size of his county government, what the major departments are, and where these are located. (See Chart IV, page 14)

The use of an overhead projector is recommended as students complete these assignments. Teachers in large urban counties may not be able to use the floorplans of the courthouse; however, the students can still gain an understanding of where the local government operates. A good follow-up or review technique is to use slides showing the various buildings housing county government. Students enjoy the recognition and location of these places.

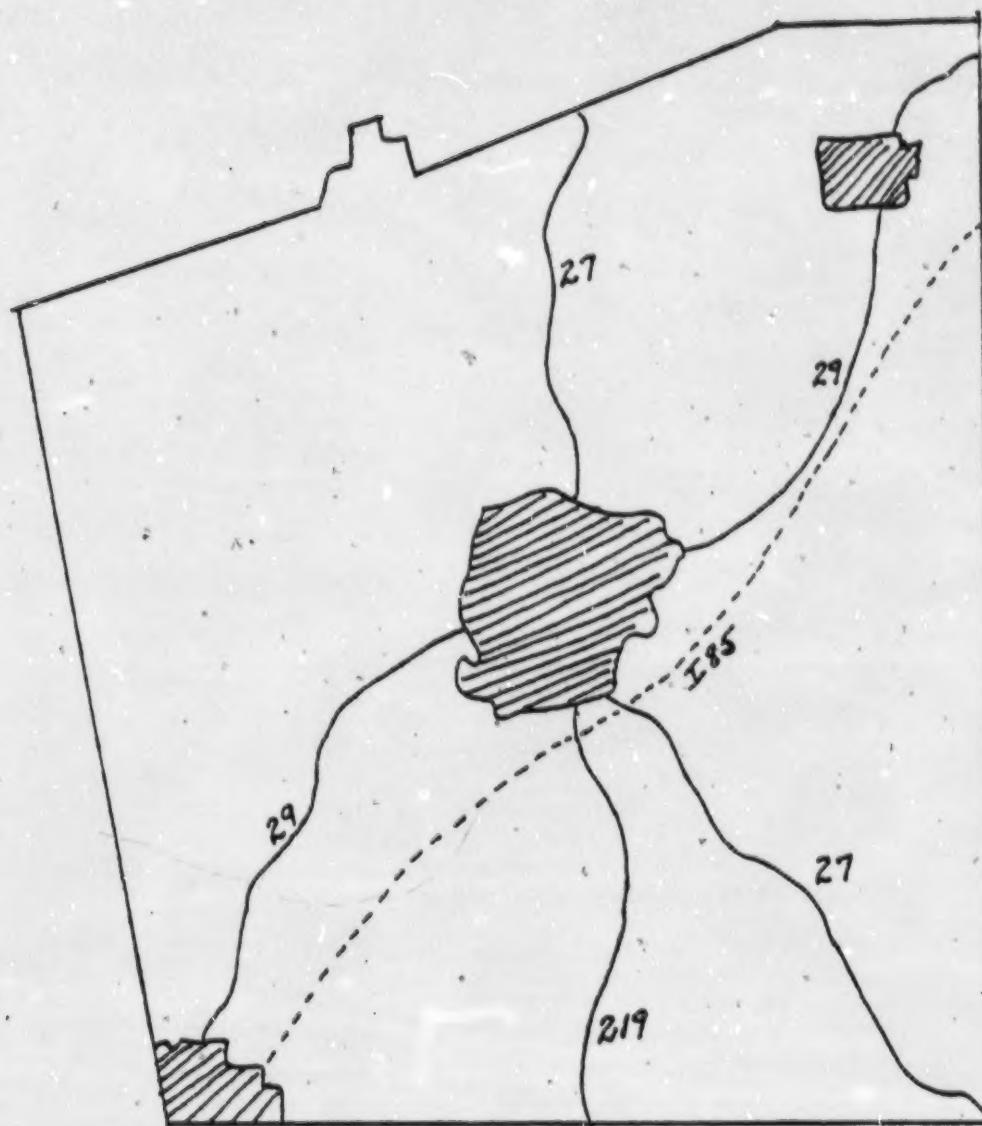
Slides. Students respond well then when they see something local. The old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words holds true in the study of local government.

Today's teacher competes with mass media for student attention. Students who have grown up with visual media find the traditional

**CHART I  
DIRECTORY OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

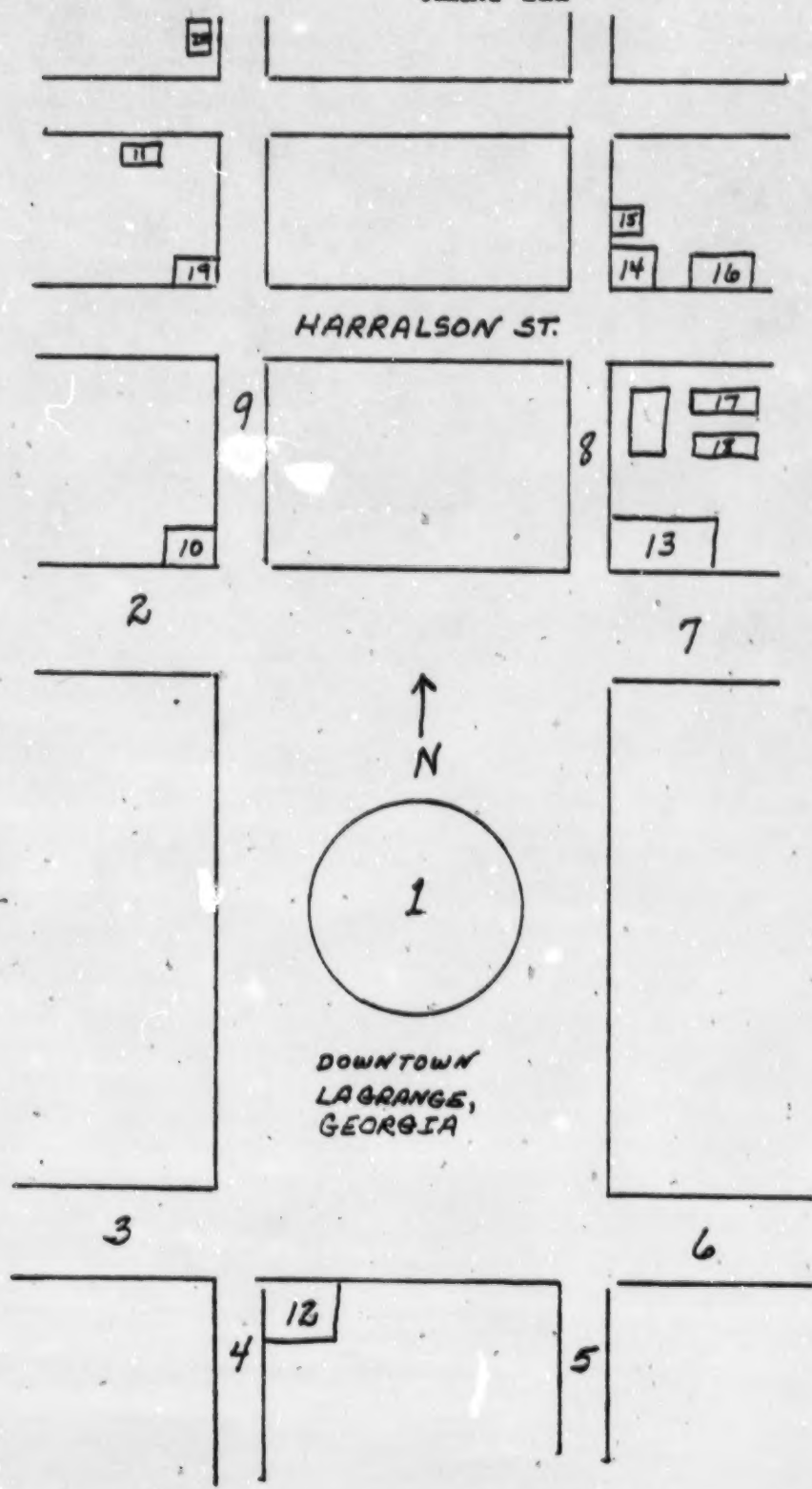
| County Agency<br>or Department | Phone<br>Number | Address | Official in<br>Charge | Mark (E)<br>if Elected | Responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
|                                |                 |         |                       |                        |                  |

## CHART II

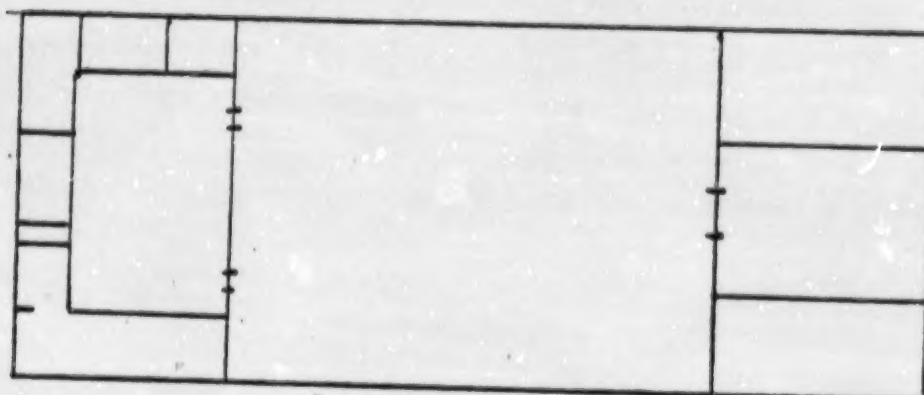


TROUP COUNTY. GEORGIA

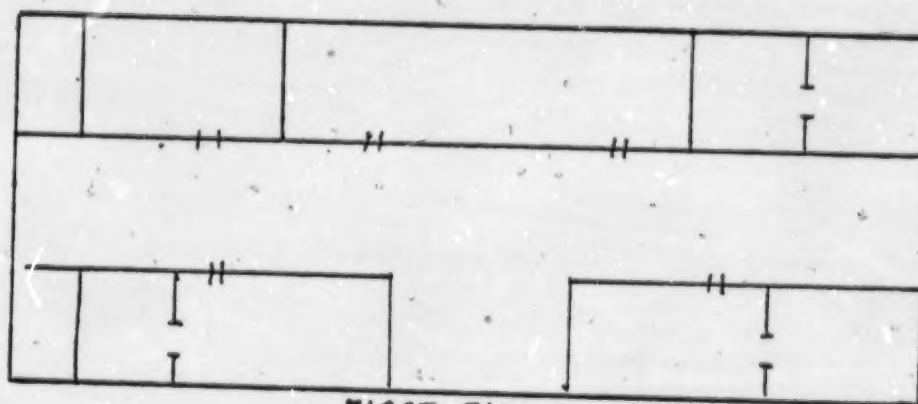
CHART III



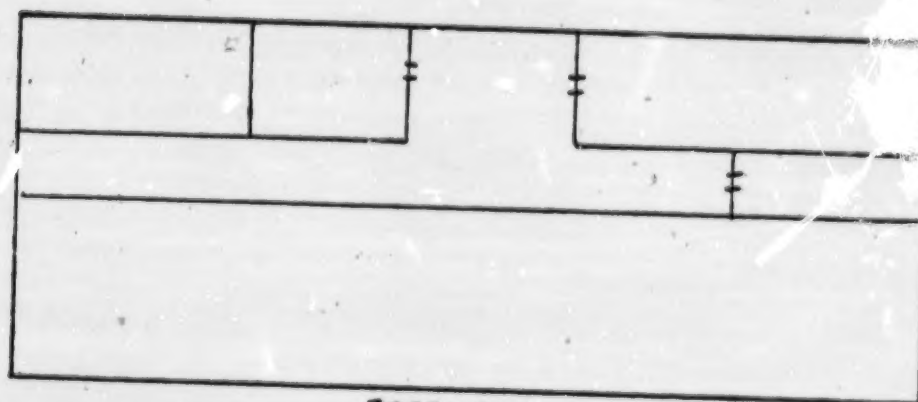
## CHART IV



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



BASEMENT

teaching approach lacking. Since so much time is spend "media" watching, why not use the same techniques in the classroom?

Slides are extremely helpful in motivating student interest. With slides, the classroom can be transported into the areas of local government which are studied. Slides also can be used to show how the community has made progress. Photographs of the past reproduced on slides arouse student interest. Documents can be photographed and reproduced on the screen for close studying.

In three American government classes at Troup High School (64 students at the time of the survey in 1979), 44 percent felt that teacher-made slide presentations helped in the learning process. Specifically, 75 percent enjoyed a two day slide presentation on the local steps in a criminal investigation. A story slide program on the arrest and trial of two teenagers for car theft was favored by 73 percent of the students. A slide tour of the Troup County Correctional Institute (Stockage) was enjoyed by 81 percent. Of the students who viewed the slides only one did not like a presentation, and one-fourth made no comments.

Slides are practically inexpensive when consideration is given toward their years of use. Generally, a 20 exposure roll of 35mm slide film purchased and developed at a discount store cost less than \$4.00. Since the teacher makes the slides, the pictures contain what is important for a particular class or lecture. Commercially prepared productions do not include local needs. As changes occur in the county, slides can be edited.

In preparing to shoot slide film for classroom use, several factors should be kept in mind:

1. Make sure the camera is in good operating condition and that the user is familiar with the camera.

2. Plan the presentation on paper. Block out your shots. Even if you have never been to a site before, you can still decide on the types of pictures and subject matter you want.
3. Take a copy of your production plans with you when you visit.
4. Ask permission to photograph. Photograph the official at work. Students need to recognize personalities and job surroundings.
5. Be careful in photographing jails, prisons, and police stations. Care must be taken not to make pictures showing faces of inmates.
6. In photographing old documents, care should be taken not to show names of recognizable families. Photograph documents at the turn of the century or earlier. The older documents usually show the old slave records and are beautifully handwritten.

A good rule is to photograph records of your own family. Do realize though that courthouse records and documents are available to the public and can be read by all.

7. Overshoot. Photograph everything. It is better to have too many slides than not enough.
8. Begin photographing soon enough to allow for editing and retakes.
9. Once slides have been assembled in proper viewing order, note the sequence and number by titles or short descriptions on paper. A 3x5 notebook is excellent for this. As slides are projected, the notebook is helpful in forecasting what comes next or the number of a slide for back reference. It is also handy in locating that one particular slide that is needed on the spur of the moment.

The quality and success of slide productions depends on the knowledge of the photographer, equipment used, planning, and creativity. Students enjoy programs linked together as a story series more than individual slides.

It is not necessary to own expensive equipment to make good quality slides. Most instamatic cameras (110) are designed for slide film use. The Eastman Kodak Company has marketed an Ektagaphic

Visualmaker which uses a 110 camera and two specially designed close-up lens stands. When fitted on the stand the camera is focused to take pictures from books, magazines, post cards, and other media. The only drawback to the system is the increasing high cost of flash cubes.

Most instamatic cameras have fixed minimum focal depth at three (3) feet. Fixed focal depth makes close-up document photos impossible. Such a camera is good for general photography and will satisfactorily produce good presentations. An added advantage is that students generally have access to this style camera and may use their own in documenting special reports or visitations for the class.

Increasingly popular and more affordable today is the 35mm single-lens reflex (SLR) camera. Generally, these cameras can be adapted with special close-up rings which when attached to the lens enable the photographer to focus within a few inches of the subject. A set of three rings cost less than \$25.00. As the SLR camera has adjustable film speeds, shutter speeds, and lens openings, it is possible to photograph without the expense of flash. A copy-stand makes work easier because the camera is firmly supported. When specific slides cannot be created, make copies from photographs in magazines. In copying pictures, it is a good idea to choose color pictures where possible. Color adds life and stimulates interest.

An idea is only as good as its execution. Most classroom teachers do not have extensive background experience in media production. The Kodak Company has produced a helpful publication entitled, Planning and Producing Slide Programs. A resource not to be forgotten is the school's audio-visual consultant, CESA personnel, and media centers at

regional colleges. Professional photographers and managers of retail photo equipment stores are also helpful.

In preparing slides to use in local government studies, the teacher needs to be aware of local subjects. Tour the courthouse. Visit departments of government. Explain what it is you want to do. Schedule appointments.

The following is a list of photographs which have been used successfully in the classroom. Some departments, particularly law enforcement and the courts, because of the nature of their work offer more to photograph than others. Some departments are better studies through samples of their work. A lot depends upon what is in one's community.

#### Suggested Slides.

##### I. Police and/or Sheriff Department

- A. Personnel
  - 1. Sheriff or Chief
  - 2. Deputies
  - 3. Investigators/Detectives
  - 4. Jailers
- B. Radio Dispatcher
- C. Radio Communication Log or data cards
- D. Map showing investigative jurisdiction
- E. Completion of reports
- F. Record storage
- G. Communication teletype and computer systems
- H. Posters circulated by FBI and state agencies
- I. Living quarters for personnel
- J. Conference and briefing rooms for "Watch" changes
- K. Continuing education facilities
- L. Documents
  - 1. Arrest reports
  - 2. Booking reports
  - 3. Traffic citations
- M. Toximeter
- N. Cells
  - 1. Juvenile
  - 2. Adult males
  - 3. Adult females
  - 4. Bullpen
  - 5. Drunk tank

- O. Recorder's or Small Claim Court
- P. Police Department (exterior)
- Q. Equipment
- R. Crime prevention materials

## II. Superior and State Courts

- A. Location of the courts
- B. Superior and State Court Judges
- C. Chambers of judges
- D. Courtroom
  - 1. Witness stand
  - 2. Jury room
  - 3. Jury stand
  - 4. Prosecution table
  - 5. Defense table
  - 6. Public areas
  - 7. Holding cells

## III. State Correctional Facilities

- A. Exterior
- B. Personnel
  - 1. Warden
  - 2. Deputy Warden
  - 3. Guards
- C. Signs (generally depict that prisoners have no rights)
- D. Bars on windows and heavy doors
- E. Solitary confinement
- F. Cells
  - 1. General prison population
  - 2. Special inmates
  - 3. Trustees
- G. Recreational areas
- H. Learning centers
- I. Bathing facilities
- J. Kitchen
- K. Mess Hall

## IV. Services of County Government

- A. Courthouse
- B. Jail and Sheriff Departments
- C. Civil Defense
- D. Hospital
- E. Public Health Departments
- F. Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Centers
- G. Welfare
- H. Libraries
- I. Fire Department
- J. Police Department
- K. Senior Citizens Center

- \*L. Agricultural Office
- \*M. State Patrol
- \*N. State Employment Agency
- \*O. Social Security
- \*P. Selective Service

\* Although these are federal and state agencies, it is useful for students to know their respective locations.

#### V. Voter Registrar

- A. Location of office
- B. Voter Registrar
- C. Voter registration cards
- D. Election districts
- E. Absentee Ballots

#### VI. Probate Judge

- A. Location of office
- B. Probate Judge
- C. Ballots
- D. Ballot boxes
- E. Marriage license
- F. Guardianship documents
- G. Wills
- H. Estate evaluation records
- I. Record books
- J. Newspapers
- K. Fire-arm applications

#### VII. Clerk of Court

- A. Location of office
- B. Clerk
- C. Deeds and Titles
- D. Trial records
- E. Court documents

#### VIII. Tax Commissioner

- A. Location of office
- B. Commissioner
- C. Tax Digest
- D. Types of automobile tags

#### IX. County Commissioners

- A. Location of office
- B. Commissioners
- C. Services of Commissioners
  1. Roads, bridges, airports
  2. Setting and collecting taxes
  3. Law enforcement and correctional facilities
  4. Storage of birth and marriage certificates
  5. Health and welfare protection

6. Recreational facilities
7. Licensing traveling salesmen
8. Regulating the sale of alcohol
9. Public Libraries and historical areas
10. Drainage systems
11. Budget for county
12. Caring for county equipment
13. Emergencies (Civil Defense and National Guard)

Transparencies. Local government studies are a new and challenging area for students. This is also an area of teaching in which high school teachers have had little previous academic experience. The varied duties of local officials, boards, and commissioners are difficult to grasp. Whatever the subject, certain basic facts must be learned, and all learning cannot be fun and games. Transparencies make it easier for students to organize and to learn facts.

Briefly a transparency is a sheet of acetate upon which something has been printed or drawn. When placed on an overhead project, the printing is projected on a screen in a large easy-to-see form. Some commercial publishers have transparency sets on local government; however, as with other published media, the set may not contain what is specially needed locally.

Teachers can prepare transparencies in two easy ways. Acetate sheets (8½x11) can be purchased at office supply stores in 100 sheet packages. To double the amount of working material, cut the sheets in half to measure 4½x5½. This shape turned lengthwise is perfect to write or to draw on with special overhead projection pens. The small size sheets adapt well to projection because all of the written words on the transparency can be focused on the screen large enough to see at one time. When an 8½x11 sheet is projected, the size of the image must be reduced considerably if all of the printing is to be on the screen at once. Then students at the back of the room have difficulty reading it.

In projecting transparencies, a sheet of construction paper or cardboard may be used to block out areas that are not under immediate discussion.

A second, somewhat more expensive, way of producing transparencies of printed (published) media is to use a 3M thermofax copier. Thin acetate sheets especially designed for the copier can be purchased in packages of 100 sheets for under \$40.00. Newspaper clippings, cartoons, editorials, charts, graphs, almost anything with carbon-based ink, can be placed under the acetate, and the two inserted into the copier. The result is a black and white transparency of the printed media. If the material to be copied cannot be clipped from its source, make a xerox copy of the material, then place the acetate over the copy and insert both into the machine. The results are equally as pleasing.

Transparencies can be stored in standard size manila folders for full sheets. Old folders cut down to  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$  are excellent for half-size storage.

There are other ways of producing transparencies. The individual teacher should consult local media personnel for help. A visit to an office supply store which sells machines similar to the one at school is helpful. Materials and means for transparency reproduction can be demonstrated while new materials are seen.

In teaching local government the teacher can outline the major topics, duties, or responsibilities of local government on transparencies. As each is discussed, the student is able to copy material into class notes and include teacher explanations. If the parts of a list are uncovered one at a time, students will listen more attentively. When all the information is revealed at once, students usually copy everything and do not listen to the discussion.

Transparencies help the teacher and learner in several ways.

1. Projected material is large, colorful and easy to use. It is durable and will last. For the teacher who uses the chalkboard a great deal it means not writing the same materials several times a day.
2. The teacher is constantly able to see the faces of the student. When writing on a chalkboard, the teacher's back is turned. With transparencies, a teacher can see difficulties which may develop among students.
3. Transparencies make it possible for the teacher to walk about the room during notetaking and discussion. Close contact is maintained with students.
4. Teacher-made materials can be updated. With thermofax units, material in last night's paper can be projected for discussion the next day.
5. Continuity is maintained. There is no question as to what has been covered from class to class.
6. Students learn. In a 1979 survey of 64 American government students at Troup High, 66 percent felt that transparencies made it easier for them to learn than the traditional use of the chalkboard.

The following are examples of topic transparencies used in teaching local government:

Topic transparencies.

- A. Map of Troup County, Georgia, showing
  1. boundaries
  2. county seat
  3. major municipal areas
  4. election districts
- B. Courthouse complex (main and supplemental county buildings in the immediate vicinity of the courthouse)
- C. Floorplans of the courthouse
- D. List of county elected officials
- E. Chart, showing the organization of small county government
- F. Duties of the County Commissioners
- G. Duties of the Judge of Probate Court

- H. Duties of the Tax Commissioner
- I. Duties of the Clerk of Court
- J. Duties of the Sheriff
- K. Duties of the Coroner
- L. Revenue for local government, taxes
- M. Computing property taxes
  - 1. Assessed valuation
  - 2. Fair market value
  - 3. Duties of the Tax Assessor
  - 4. Determining county tax rate--millage
  - 5. Tax problems
- N. Types of local and state taxes
- O. Non-tax revenues
- P. Changing county population
  - 1. Reasons for decline in population
  - 2. Reasons for growth in population
  - 3. Future growth of Troup County, Georgia
- Q. Current issues
  - 1. Consolidation, the pros and cons
  - 2. Money worries
- R. Law enforcement and the courts

#### Special teaching techniques using media

##### Electrifying the classroom: using circuit boards.

Almost all teachers have at sometimes made or read about circuit boards. Usually directions for their construction can be found in Boy and Girl Scout manuals, project books, and teacher-made media textbooks. Briefly, a circuit board is a teacher-or-student-constructed device consisting of wire, electrical contacts, battery, lightbulb, perforated board, and questions. When a student answers a question, he puts one end of a probe onto the appropriate question's contact point. The other end of the probe touches the answer contact. If the answer response is correct, an electrical circuit is completed and the bulb lights. The student receives immediate feedback.

Advantages of instruction using the circuit board are: (1) it arouses student interest, (2) it provides immediate feedback of results, (3) it requires active rather than passive participation, and (4) it introduces a novelty in the learning situation that encourages on-task performance.

In the area of local government instruction the circuit board can be adapted in several ways. Although it may be simply a list of questions with possible answers, more creatively it could consist of a map of the county (students would locate important areas), a map of the county seat, charts, graphs, or a floorplan of the local courthouse. With the latter arrangement students would answer questions by locating the office of the official responsible for a particular service.

The size and elaboration of the board is up to the user, also its success with students and its storage space. As a circuit board is teacher-made, it can be updated with time. Since its use requires little attention, it can easily serve as remedial material for slower students or as review material by the entire class.

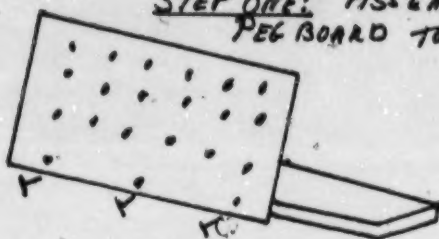
Specifically, the materials needed to construct a circuit board are:

1. Insulated wire (doorbell variety is acceptable)
2. Brass fasteners (available at office supply stores)
3. Poster board or perf-board
4. 2x4 scrap lumber to serve as a base or stand
5. One or two size "C" batteries
6. Bulb
7. Bulb holder
8. Battery holder(s)
9. Screws (wood screws to secure base to perf-board)
10. Tools (saw, scissors, screwdriver, wire stripper)

Steps for the preparation of a circuit board are illustrated on Chart V, page 26.

Computer assisted instruction. One medium which is becoming more

STEP ONE: ASSEMBLE  
PEG BOARD TO BASE



STEP TWO: GLUE  
POSTER TO BOARD



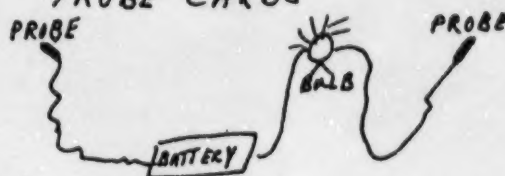
STEP THREE: INSERT BULB AND CONTACT POINTS  
IN SELECTED LOCATIONS ON POSTER



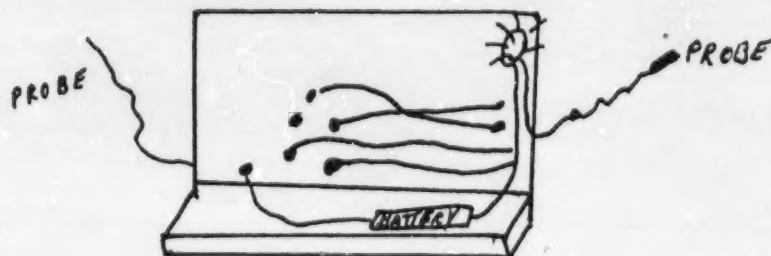
STEP FOUR: WIRE BACK OF  
BOARD, CONNECTING STIMULI  
TO RESPONSE



STEP FIVE: ASSEMBLE  
POWER SUPPLY AND  
PROBE CARDS



STEP SIX: ASSEMBLY  
POWER SUPPLY TO BOARD AND TEST



affordable by school systems is the portable computer. With the proper programming this instrument can be used to assist the teacher in most any of the subject matter fields. Once the proper sequence is devised, the computer can be reprogrammed with variable data to keep it abreast of classroom studies.

Computer programming is a complicated process. In order to devise a program, the individual classroom teacher will need to work closely with one knowledgeable about computer programming. One means of obtaining a program and also stimulating student interest is to organize the project into group work. The group should consist of students who are studying both programming and the subject which the program will contain. In instances, it may be possible to devise a contractual arrangement whereby the program (plan) is developed for one class (math) and the programmed data is developed for the second class (social studies).

In the fall of 1978 a contract was worked-out between four senior government students who were also studying fifth year mathematics. In return for formulating a computer program on local government, which would count as 25 percent of the second nine-weeks grade in both classes, the students were given some release time from regular classroom activities. Some homework was also suspended for these students. The mathematics teacher agreed to supervise the writing of the program while the social studies teacher supervised the information (questions and answers) for the data bank.

The resulting program, written in basic computer language, for a TRS-80 Radio Shack Level II computer, used approximately 20K bytes.

The program was stored on a good quality 30 minute cassette tape. The computer logic (how the computer was programmed to function) can be used in any subject. The particular data statements were designed in this instance to question students on local, county government.

The data for the program consists of ninety-nine questions, 33 each of multiple choice, true and false, and fill-in-the-blanks. The computer randomly selected the order in which it will ask types of questions and then randomly selects the questions it will ask in each group. The first and second groups of questions will always contain eight questions each or a total of 16 questions. The last group will contain nine questions. Thus a total of 25 questions will then be asked of the student. In the multiple choice sequence, the computer will furthermore, at random, arrange the different responses. With this arrangement of questions, no students will receive the same test. The directions for answering the questions and the questions are then displayed on a small video display screen.

Computer usage in the classroom. The Radio Shack TRS 80 Level II computer takes up very little classroom space and is easily stored on a small table. Use of the computer varies with the teacher and class, but some possible suggestions follow.

1. Individual students may use the computer for remedial work. Since the program provides direct feedback, incorrect responses are immediately noted. Page numbers for extra help and correct answers are given to the student. The student may work at his own pace.
2. Students may use the program as a pretest of their local government knowledge.
3. Small groups of students may divide up into teams and devise a game. Each team receives points for correct responses.
4. Since the computer seldom repeats the same order of questioning and answer responses are rearranged in each test, individual post-test

may be given over the local government unit.

The more students involved with the computer's use at any one time the better the response from the class. A favorite game using all students is classroom "baseball." The class is divided into two teams. One student is selected to operate the computer. Another student keeps score. Bases are located in the room. The first team at bat sends a student to home base. The computer operator reads the question aloud as the batter sees it displayed on the screen. If the batter answers correctly, he moves to first base. An incorrect answer is an out. Three outs are allowed to each team. If a batter elects, he may remain at the computer for second, third, and fourth questions. Thus it is possible for a team to score not just singles but also doubles, triples, and homeruns. In the interest of time, no student should be allowed more than 15 seconds to answer a question. The team with the most runs wins the game.

Visitations. Throughout the writings of John Dewey is the express concern that school experiences are isolated from real life. The use of the community as a learning laboratory is an expression of this concern.

There is no better stimulus for learning than on-site visitation and participation. Field trips enable students to share experiences and to increase their understanding of the problems facing local administrators and local government. Areas of vocational preference are also viewed. In addition, field trips are good public relations for students and local officials.

Local government offers an abundance in field trip possibilities. Because some functions of local government lend themselves to larger rather than smaller groups, two means of conducting field trips emerge. One is to take the entire class or, in some instances, classes. The other is to visit in small groups, 5 to 10 students in size.

Regardless of the means selected, the teacher should remember certain procedures. First, plan ahead with the school administrator. Secure the necessary permissions to leave school including parental permission to take the student by bus or cars off-campus. Second, make personal contact with the local official. Plan the visit. Let the official know specifically what you want to see, when, where, and how. Also determine the size of the group that can be comfortable in the surroundings. In the planning, the teacher should tour or meet with the official to find out what is available. This knowledge is useful in briefing the students prior to visitation. Third, acquaint the students with what they are to see and hear. On some occasions give students a particular problem to solve. Fourth, officials generally like questions, and nothing is more disturbing than a group with nothing to say. Teams should prepare interview questions ahead of time. Fifth, since the group is moving out into the public, it is a good idea to discuss dress, behavior, and manners. In general, it is better to keep large group visitations at a minimum as interference with other classes and school activities occurs.

The second visitation method varies greatly from the first and is more practical for some schools. The many visitation sites are discussed with the class shortly after the unit on local government is introduced. Each student chooses several areas he would like to visit. Where possible, the student's first choice is selected by the teacher as visitation groups are arranged. Contact is made with the participating official, and the group travels by car to the site. If the students participating are in the same class period, little interference should occur with other classes. If the group is mature and responsible, it is

possible for the teacher to remain at school. The site should be within a few minutes of the school so that the students can visit and return within a reasonable time. Trips over extended class periods should be cleared with the teachers of classes students will miss.

On the following day each visitation group shares what they have learned with other students in the class. Pamphlets, pictures, or other visual materials which have been collected can be circulated within the class and stored in the classroom pamphlet file. A videotaping or recording of the presentation can then be used in other classes. In some instances a group may wish to visit a department over a period of several days and prepare a slide presentation for the class. "Teacher-made" slides can also be used by the group as a presentation is made.

Planning a visitation. The following suggestions may be helpful in organizing a visitation. The ideal spot for keeping the information is on the inside front cover of the file folders which hold information gathered on previous trips.

1. Location--include street address and travel time from school
2. Telephone number
3. Contact person--the full name of the person who is to be visited, his office number and any specific directions to the office
4. Time to call--this is helpful for the teacher in setting up appointments
5. Length of visit--approximately how long will it take for a group to interview and/or tour a general location
6. Number of students--how many can comfortably attend
7. Exact time and date

Areas for large group visitation

- A. Session of Superior Court
- B. Session of State Court
- C. Courthouse
- D. County jail

Areas for small group visitation

- A. Small Claims Court
- B. Police or Recorders Court
- C. City Council meeting
- D. County Commissioners meeting
- E. Board of Education meeting
- F. Hospital administrator
- G. Public Health Department
- H. Public Housing Authority
- I. Forest Service
- J. Public Workcamp
- K. Airport
- L. County Offices
  - 1. Clerk of Court
  - 2. Tax Commissioner
  - 3. Zoning Commissioner
  - 4. Probate Judge
  - 5. Judges
  - 6. Sheriff and Police Departments
  - 7. Superintendent of Schools
  - 8. Voter Registration Office
  - 9. Civil Defense
  - 10. District Attorney
  - 11. Department of Family and Children Services
  - 12. Probation officer
  - 13. City Hall
    - a. Mayor
    - b. City Manager
    - c. Treasurer
  - 14. Fire and Police Departments
  - 15. Landfield
  - 16. Utilities Department
  - 17. Water Works

Inquiry list. The following is a list of some inquiry investigations students deal with successfully. How to:

- A. obtain a vendor's license.
- B. use the Small Claims Court.
- C. obtain free mental and dental care.
- D. obtain a zoning permit.
- E. obtain a marriage license.
- F. obtain a divorce.
- G. obtain help in receiving back alimony payment or child support.
- H. swear out a warrant.
- I. post bond.
- J. register a complaint against a police officer.
- K. get a building permit.
- L. retrieve an impounded automobile
- M. pay a traffic fine.
- N. determine the boundaries of property.
- O. settle an estate.
- P. become guardian of a minor.
- Q. declare bankruptcy.
- R. acquire a firearm license.
- S. apply for a job in city and county government.
- T. appeal tax assessments.
- U. apply for a change in an automobile title and tag.

Classroom pamphlet file: "Things file". A simple yet effective motivational resource in the classroom is the pamphlet file, or "Things file." The file can be as modest as a cardboard box, wide enough to hold manila file folders or as sturdy as a file cabinet. Most office supply stores and department stores sell inexpensive corrugated

boxes which fold into file type containers. Whichever method is used, the material should be easily accessible for both students and teacher.

Once the storage method is established, all pamphlets, sample documents, graphs, photographs, news clippings, and other materials are filed. For durability, laminate materials. The method of cataloging is an individual choice. Headings can be broad or specific.

As unit work progresses and ideas are presented or questions arise, the teacher can pull from the file those documents which are applicable to current work. During spare moments students may wish to pull individual folders for study. Special research assignments can be handled by small groups or individuals in the classroom. During the years the wealth of material in the file will increase as visitation groups and the teacher obtain more resources.

Voter registration. Time was when students were educated for the future. With the passage of the 26th Amendment high schools are not only educating for the future but for the present as well. There are now only a few steps from the social studies' classroom to the voting booth.

Georgia law requires that the principal of a high school or his designee serve as a registrar for the school's voting age population. It is obvious that voter registration belongs in the high school government class. The government teacher who serves as the designated registrar adds realism to the classroom in the preparation of registration cards for students. Since voting and elections are an integral part of the social studies curriculum the teacher as registrar can not only register young voters (it takes about 4 minutes per student) but also can remind them of upcoming elections and how to obtain absentee ballots. Registered voters are likely to vote. In the classroom present and future can be joined.

A voter registration program can begin with the appointed school official visiting the county's Voter Registrar's office.

### Conclusions

Social studies teachers across the nation must continually review and revise teaching techniques and course content. Earlier in this paper it was stated that studies on local government have been neglected for too long. The government which most affects and serves the student on a day to day basis often takes a backseat to the more powerful, more impressive national government. Studies show that the traditional classroom approach to government studies is not meeting the needs of today's students. There is no assurance that any type government course will produce a concerned and participating adult. However, if schools are to continue to promote their citizenship goals, some changes must be made in the social studies curricula.

The media approach to teaching local government outlined has been used by its author for two years. No empirical data, however, can be introduced to prove that the students who participated in the course have or will exercise their right to vote or will be active in local politics. However with nominal cost high school students can be made more aware of the scope of local government. Practical lessons which challenge and make the student aware of the duties of local officials and the responsibilities of local government will be positive assets upon graduation. Furthermore, a student who has registered to vote, who has visited the courthouse by either visitation or slides, and who has heard and read articles on local issues is more likely to be a participant in his local government than one who has spent but a short time listening to a lecture on the subject.